



JESUS OLD MEMBERS' GROUP XL NETWORK NEWSLETTER

My apologies for the tardiness of this newsletter but I was out of the country for most of the 4 months to the end of March which was followed by a further delay at the College end. It is brilliant news we have reached the target for the Bursary – a really deserving support to diversity in the College. Please read Malcolm McIvor's note about it over the page.

We are intending to publish an updated Members' Directory. There are data protection implications with respect to this so please read the notice below from Malcolm McIvor and Richard Cosier.

In the current newsletter we have a further article in our continuing series on the way specific industries or profession changed over a working life. This time the subject is journalism. There is the first of a new run of articles written by old members for different purposes that would seem of interest to readers here. This one is on 'Glucose – the Hidden Killer'. I would welcome similar contributions for future editions.

A brief diary note - Old Members' Day is on 29th June. Currently the plan is to start and finish the day at College but in between there will be what we expect to be a thoroughly entertaining guided introduction to the new Mathematics Institute building which will be a visit for maths and non-maths old members alike. Watch out for the email with the details.

Peter May (1968)

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE CHAIR AND MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Members are definitely due a new Directory! With the recent personal Data Protection requirements and the stream of data breaches by public companies we need your permission as to what data is included. Our policy statement on Data Protection can be seen on our web-site, jomg.org.

Most members have already given permission for their details to be circulated to other members, but we will be asking you to confirm the accuracy of what we hold by individual e-mails in the next month. We hope that everyone will give permission to use their information so that we will all find the Directory useful.

It is our intention to publish Name, Year, Subject and the first half of your postcode in any event. For those opting into fuller publication, we would like to add an e-mail address or a phone number as a point of contact. These inclusions will support the Group's aims. The Directory will be provided by email in pdf format or, if specifically requested, by post.

We are providing a two-week window for replies so please do look out for my e-mail as it is your Directory, your Data and your Group.

JOURNALISM

Back in 1973, no one in the older generation, among alumni, in careers advice or in the appointments office suggested journalism as a fulfilling, lucrative or in any way otherwise desirable career for a new Oxford University graduate. I suspect that this attitude persists, and yet it has provided me with an interesting, uplifting and, at times, thrilling occupation which has used to the limits the education I enjoyed in taking my history degree at Jesus College.

It is, of course, a cliché for everyone concerned in any profession to describe how much their life and working practices have changed since they first entered it but it's no hyperbole to liken in scale the technological changes in the day-to-day practice of journalism from the early Seventies until the present day to the changes in aircraft development from the Sopwith Camel to Concorde.

At the end of my first week as a reporter on the local London weekly the Waltham Forest Guardian, an infamous East End gang carried out a shotgun raid on our offices with the intention of stealing the printers' weekly wages. When they heard, the printers were so annoyed that they sallied forth from their presses, linotype machines, etc, to hurl heavy metal ingots at the gang, even demolishing their own cars in the process.

One of my new colleagues, a diminutive photographer, won a national award for a picture he took of an armed raider levelling a shotgun straight at him across the bonnet of a van.

There are many reasons why this wouldn't happen today - primarily the fact that there no longer exists an exclusive, highly paid, elite group of men who conduct the composition, transcription, writing, bundling and distribution of our regular newspapers.

When I joined the local Guardian, it had an editorial staff of around 80, covering two London boroughs and three outlying districts, and sold up to 100,000 copies a week. It was largely profitable, albeit not enormously so, funded mainly by small ads as well as shop, car and estate agents' advertisements. In good weeks, the presses were pushed to produce papers of 100 pages or more.

The stories were written on typewriters and sub-edited in blue

pencil and the pages were set up in lead type and arranged in a 'chase', on a 'stone' in a way which Wynkyn de Worde would have had little trouble recognising.

The local Guardian-Gazette group still exists but now has an editorial staff of around 12 producing papers of around 24 pages, with slip editions for the outlying areas. They no longer attend 'police calls' or 'fire calls' as we used to twice a week and they rarely attend council meetings. Most local councils have now retreated behind 'cabinet' systems which allow them to take important decisions without public reporting of their discussions.

It took five years for our ancient technology to be replaced by 'word processors' and 'paste-up', the type being cut up by scalpel rather than hammer and chisel. When I progressed to Fleet Street, I found myself back among typewriters and 'hot metal'.

The normal method of progression was to prove yourself on shifts for one of the London dailies. I tried my hand at the Daily Mirror (where we had to bang the type keys really hard to write stories on a five-thick roll of carbon paper) and was fortunate to be at the Daily Mail on the night when HMS Sheffield was hit in the South Atlantic and we nailed the story. This kind of recruitment is now rare (though not unheard of), largely because the local papers are no longer the solid reporting training ground they were in the past. National daily journalists these days are more likely to be recruited via dedicated training schemes.

One major difference with today's news distribution is that the printing no longer needs to be anywhere near the writing. In fact, these days, there doesn't have to be any printing at all. Electronic word platforms have been predicted to replace newspapers many times in the past: first it was Teletext, then email, then online, though it was still observable that people preferred to read a newspaper on their morning bus/train. Now it's newspaper apps - and that really has made inroads. Many more people now study screens rather than printed pages. And many more would-be journalists are stuck in rows of office desks 'up-loading' material to greedy websites which demand a constant turnover of mediocre material.



Is today's press more salacious than in the past? Undoubtedly. When I began working on the Daily Mail news desk, there were stories deemed 'too low life' for the paper. Not anymore. But the British press has always been excessive, outlandish even.

So, has the game changed? Not really; the principles are still the same (get in there, get yourself known, ask the right questions, find the right place to publish, etc). Some things have changed: there is now, in our society, a far greater

polarisation of political opinions and, consequently, a greater reluctance to read about or see things which might not accord with an individual's point of view. But journalism is still a career in which you can start immediately doing interesting and exciting things, and in which you can be at the very top while still being your own boss, independent of others' control, deciding what you wish to do.

Andy Simpson (1970)

GLUCOSE – the hidden poison

Such a harmless sounding thing, glucose sits on the top of the famous Krebs cycle which serves to give all cells energy by creating ATP. Apart from sounding familiar, it is a strategic building block in biology; for example, cellulose (amongst many bio polymers) is made up of chains of glucose. Cane sugar is 50% glucose.

After a meal, the concentration of glucose in the blood rises and the level of glucose is controlled by pancreatic insulin, amongst other factors. The common perception about this little molecule is 97% true. It is a useful molecule and our lives would be dramatically different if we had developed to use any other sugar. In fact, I doubt we could live without it. The problem comes with the 3% of the life of a glucose molecule. Any organic chemist can tell you that most of the time its structure is a stable six-membered ring, but it can and does turn into an aldehyde for 3% of the time which has consequences.

Aldehydes are familiar to most of us – the one derived from alcohol metabolism (acetaldehyde) causes headaches amongst other side effects. Damien Hurst famously uses formaldehyde to preserve his sculptures. The reason this aldehyde is used is that nothing can live in it and everything placed in it is preserved irreversibly. Its ability to destroy all living tissue explains why the Ministry used it in tons to try and eliminate anthrax on Gruinard Island. The latter was used as a test site to see if aerosols could be used to deliver

lethal doses of bugs like anthrax. The reason aldehydes are not good is because they react with all proteins to make them unrecognisable (i.e. non-self).

I hope you get the impression that glucose is not the harmless chemical we know and love, but we should be wary of it.

When control of glucose in the blood is lost (as in diabetes), high glucose levels can result after a meal which overexposes the body to significant amount of glucose aldehyde which is why diabetics need to measure blood glucose all the time. In Type I diabetes, measurement and injection with insulin can occur 5-6 times a day. The latest insulin pumps and glucose sensors are helping diabetics to manage better and better. Research to build pancreatic replacements is advancing all the time. Although we are not out of the wood, it will hopefully not be too long.

Another problem already hitting the health service is the alarming increase in obesity – one in four nurses and 10% of all males in this country are obese according to the Telegraph. Obesity leads to Type II diabetes.

So ... try this idea – give yourself a present – don't buy any sugar and avoid sweet things and with luck you may live to see a day when glucose is seen as a foe and not a friend.

Dr Peter Dean (Inventor of the test for HbA1c based on boronic acid)

XL BURSARY

We met our target of £100,000 as most of you know. This is a real demonstration of what is possible and the importance of both large and small donations. Over fifty of our Group contributed - those with financial capacity dug deep and those of more modest means clearly were there doing all they could. Everyone supported the spirit of the endeavour and with over 50 donors from our Group of 220 or so at the launch, it is simply first class.

This Bursary is in addition to the Group's ongoing post-grad. and under-grad. bursaries and exhibitions, which total £17,000 p.a.

All those who contributed have been personally thanked by the Principal - (if you haven't please do let me know, apologies!) - which shows how much the College and University appreciate your commitment to future education. Many awards are now linked to breadth of participation so, sincere thanks to you all.

Malcolm McIvor Chair of XL Group

JESUS OLD MEMBERS SKIING IN 3 VALLEYS

Well a few weeks ago there I was an on Eurostar to Moutiers with three of my old Jesus mates, Chris Hicks, Rhodri Walters and Geoff Bryant, on our way to ski in the Three Valleys – what's not to like! And it was good! Excellent snow, weather variable but good skiing, wistful reminiscence and plenty of Guinness après ski in La Taiga Bar followed by a splendid meal in our chalet with good wine and company to boot.

We met a ski instructor in La Taiga who led adventurous training courses including the 'Telemark Heroes' route in Norway of WW2 fame – what an interesting man. Rhodri and I did the only decent thing one can do when skiing down the lovely long Jerusalem run into St Martin and were conjubilant with song rendering hymns from our youth that

contained 'Jerusalem'! Reminiscence of the notorious away game at Stow on the Wold in autumn 1969 when a less than sober Jerry Haile wishing to ensure he did not miss the bus went to sleep under the front wheels in a dark carpark, and a not to be named front row forward was returned to his room in Jesus in a comatose state to find his stunning girlfriend waiting in bed for his return! We strayed into to 'Windmill' Harry Greb (who is he you ask?), Bob Nairac's exploits in Oxford and sad end in a County Armagh pub and the wonders of surds. The excellent Pomerol 1982 we enjoyed with Jeff the chalet owner was a little pleasure not to be forgotten. Laughter was the order of the day! Roll on next year!

Peter May (1968)

VISIT TO KEW GARDENS

We chose a lovely September day for the trip to Kew with group of 20 Old Members congregating for a guided tour. The tour focused on the restored Temperate House was fascinating – Arabella our guide was full of in-depth information and the odd tip that the gardeners present were only too happy to devour. The guide of the other group was equally impressive and the time to wander the gardens more widely was also welcome. One of the eagle-eyed of our number spotted that one of the 20 significant donors to the restoration project was in fact a Jesus old member in the person of Jan Pethick!

We then adjourned to Ma Cuisine in Victoria Gate for a really good meal and the opportunity to chat with people who one may not have met before. Chris Hicks was left to pay the bill when the credit card machine failed and his best efforts with the nearby ATM could not fully foot the bill. Peter May, not unusually, left his bag behind and returned on



cue and was able to fund the gap and prevent a long stint for Chris with the washing up!

Chris Hicks/Peter May (1968)

JESUS COLLEGE RECUSANTS (OR JESUS COLLEGE CURRY CLUB)

This is an occasion that continues to thrive. The last meeting was on 4th June when 15 attended. Andy Simpson, a stalwart of the group, even made the effort to come late after watching his beloved Arsenal win a European tie at the Emirates!

ElVinos on this occasion gave us the room downstairs for our pre-curry drinks that certainly added to the occasion. There were at least 7 different matriculation years represented

which really adds to the attraction, with friendships across year groups being established. There are more than 40 old members 'on the books' and newcomers are always welcome. The next date is Tuesday 17th September at 5.30pm in ElVinos in Fleet Street, prior to repairing to India, India nearby at around 6.45pm.

Norman Wright (1969)

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